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No. 20.

THE YEAR.

Behold a bride, profusely dressed,
Come on her bosom, in her hair,
Her form by swathing flowers caressed,
Her brow unmarked by thought or care,
Her eyes unmarked by thought or care,
Her lips unmarked by thought or care,
Her cheeks unmarked by thought or care,
Her hands unmarked by thought or care,
Her feet unmarked by thought or care,
Her whole unmarked by thought or care,
Will she be beautiful as now.

A happy wife with glowing eyes,
And riper than lip and cheek,
Deep in the sweetest smiles,
That life may hold and love may keep,
Her growing children round her knee,
Content supreme on her face,
Her minutes touch the golden string,
She never was so beautiful as now.

A widow, with, prone, empty hands,
Shorn of her wealth and treasure,
With lifted eyes she calmly stands,
Beside the living, and the dead,
That holds her dear and early dead,
I shudder, and I shudder,
Prospect radiant crowns her head,
With praying lips and patient brow,
The waiting earth draws nearer God,
She never was so beautiful as now.

MIRIAM FARR.

A WOMAN'S VOW.

BY MARY E. WOODSON.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HEARING THE GALLONS.

The hours of the morning wore on, and a grand concourse of people came thronging by every highway and rail to the vicinity of the jail at W.

Men and women who had not quitted their homes for years were there, from the early dawn, expectant, eager to catch but one glimpse of the murderer.

Psychologists, artists and newspaper reporters were occupying prominent places, ready to make traffic out of the cut of the head, the features and the slightest word of the victim to the press. Denser and denser until an undulating sea of human forms swelled the avenues leading to the place of execution.

The officials came and went with an ominous silence, and at eleven o'clock the prisoner was reported to be alone with a priest.

"He is taking care of his own soul. Let him remember that of his victims," they cried out. "May God's mercy be far from him! Carroll Trevelyan was the people's benefactor, and may vengeance come upon his murderer, body and soul."

At length the Rev. George Withers came out, with the priest, and, still upon his eyes, and reported that the prisoner begged he might be left alone until the final hour of execution.

"What time did he give his victim for prayer? Bring him out! Bring him out!" they cried. But the sheriff, with the keys, was nowhere to be seen, and the thronging tide swelled with increasing tumult.

The minutes wore away slowly enough to those without, and the bell in the court-house steeple struck twelve. Mobs at all times are dangerous. The excitement prevailing in this one was intense, and the half-anthured fire seemed threatening to break into a general conflagration.

"Bring him out! Bring him out!" "Who was it standing upon the steps that led to the jail-yard gate?"

It was Earle Templeton, the man who had sworn to see his dead friend avenged, and he now waved his hand in token that he wished to be heard.

More powerful than the Danish king of old, the sea before him was stilled, and the clarion-like notes of his voice rang out with perfect distinctness.

He demanded of them the meaning of the tumult he witnessed. They were there with him to see the execution, and he demanded of them the meaning of the tumult he witnessed. They were there with him to see the execution, and he demanded of them the meaning of the tumult he witnessed.

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IN THE PRESENCE OF THE DEAD.

"LILIAN STOOD LOOKING WITH UNMOVED EYES DOWN AT THE PALE FACE, THAT HAD BEEN WENT ON QUARANTINE WITH ALMOST EVERY BREATH."

that this last request of a broken-hearted mother and dying wife will be respected."

At first there seemed an inclination on the part of the people to rush violently into the jail, seize on the body, and lifeless though they should find it, to tear it limb from limb, but the sheriff had lifted back and barred the doors behind him.

"Bring him out. It is some trick. Let us see that he is dead."

"Only when quiet is restored. Then you can see for yourselves, and depart without a doubt. Who here do you think would have defrauded the ends of justice? You are men with human hearts in your breasts. Think, if you can, of the mother, wife and sister of this wretched criminal waiting at home for their dead, and let him, in God's name be taken to them."

A suppressed hum passed up from the crowd, as each of them was roused by diametrically opposite influences. Earle Templeton seemed, for the moment, stunned by a blow from the hand of Destiny that had outwitted him: Dr. Chester, with visibly heaving bosom, was eagerly watching the crowd about him.

"Let us see the fellow who has cheated us to the last, and we will disperse."

Lower and lower abated the tide. Public indignation was appeased. Curiosity alone seemed dominant now.

And now the doors of his earthly prison were opened, and Ralph Thornton's body was brought forth, but his unfeathered spirit was beyond their reach. He had been placed in the rough, pallid coffin, and the bearers were forced to set down their load at the foot of the steps. Strangers, who had never looked upon him in life, came eagerly now to touch his now cold forehead with their hands, and they might make sure that it was the King of Terrors, indeed, who had cheated them of their show. And at last they seemed convinced, and fell away.

"Now," cried George Chester, after a fellow physician had held the hand of the suicide for a moment, and then released it with a satisfied shake of the head, "now for my duty." He motioned to some attendants in his employ, and they advanced quickly and bore away their burden, as if still afraid of being punished for any show of courtesy to the dishonored remains.

Back, at last, to Coldham, whither the tidings had spread before them, but no one had taken the intelligence to his former home. The mother and sister, from an inner room, heard the tramp of feet without, and with a shudder knew what it meant.

"It is over! oh, God be praised, it is over!"

Dr. Chester opened the door and came in. He did not seek to administer comfort; he knew that would be vain. In the room beyond lay the terrible proof of all their woes.

Tell me, at least tell me, there was no violent struggle—that the death agony came quietly," cried the mother, who was not a moment's pain to him.

It was hard to stand by and see this wretched woman beat herself and tear her gray hair in the wildness of her grief, but the more violent the storm, he thought, the quicker it must abate. Lilian came up to him with the same hard, outward calm of manner.

"You helped him, George?" she whispered.

pered. "You did not let him become a spectacle for all that gaping crowd. He did not die on the scaffold?"

The simple disgrace seemed to weigh upon her. Had she no thought, he wondered, for the hereafter of a soul that voluntarily frees itself from its earthly shackles?"

"No," he whispered; "that, at least, has been shunned. And now, as you have loved your brother, look to your mother. Compose her quickly, or she will lose her reason. I will go in to Mary, and then you must prepare yourself to see him for the last time."

He found the young wife sleeping still. "She had been awake for a few moments," the attendant declared, "and had fallen off again into a slumber that seemed like death. He felt her pulse, but did not mark it any unusualness. After a few seconds at her side, he went again into the next room, where the coffin had been deposited, and after a careful arrangement of the body, sat down awhile among the men."

"Where was it to be buried?"

The grave had been dug in a corner of the garden, by that of his father, whose remains had been interred three years before, with the profoundest sympathy of every citizen of the place, Mr. Trevelyan included.

There were those who would have objected if they could at this corner of the garden, by that of his father, whose remains had been interred three years before, with the profoundest sympathy of every citizen of the place, Mr. Trevelyan included.

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for a number of days that it makes me shudder to think of. If you could make her breathe one prayer at his side. Go, and when you bring her out in half an hour, do it with a promise from her that she will not return again at all."

The poor mother seemed to arouse herself for fresh burdens that she must bear. Like David when told that the child of Bathsheba was dead, she rose up and girded herself with new strength. A few moments since, and the dead had engrossed every feeling; now that the living required her attention, she dared not longer mourn.

She opened the door of the room that contained her son's body, and walked resolutely in.

Lilian stood before the couch upon which he lay, looking, with unmoved eyes, down at the pale face, that had been wont to change its expression with almost every breath.

"Oh, my Lilian, my daughter! Richard, but we must submit, our darling is now a blessed martyr in the sight of God. We must prepare to go to him, since he cannot wait for us. Let us pray here."

She had passed her arm about the girl's slender waist, and gently strove to bring her upon her knees beside the inanimate object of their love; but Lilian resisted the effort.

"No, mother," she said, half angrily. "My whole soul is set at this. A murderer has no right to be honorably buried by the grave of decent folk in their midst. Would his name ever be laid? Would not his blood be washed out of the earth? Would he be buried in a pauper's grave, and his name be washed out of the earth? Would he be buried in a pauper's grave, and his name be washed out of the earth?"

"Oh, my daughter!" cried Mrs. Thornton, falling in a passion of tears upon the girl's breast. "This is the worst blow of all to me. A goddess woman is a fearful thing. He told me that the triumph of faith."

"Tell them," was his last message, "that though my innocent life is required by the law, and we may meet again only in another world, I dare not question the wisdom or the mercy of God. Think, Lilian, think how you would pain him if he could see you as you are!"

"Oh, how I loved him," she answered, in the same low, tearless voice, "and he would expect me to grieve for him. Oh, I am all in the dark!"

"Let us pray, and the light will come," whispered her mother, imploringly.

"Yes, let us kneel. I can pray now," answered Lilian, and sinking down at her mother's side, she passed one arm across her brother's breast and lay motionless after that, with her cheek pressed to his. Mrs. Thornton's face was buried in the pillow, and her whole frame shook with emotion.

Dr. Chester had again slipped noiselessly into the room; and a little he had raised the mother first, and then Lilian. The girl looked up at him eagerly.

"Oh, George! he is not cold, and I am sure I felt a faint quiver in the muscles of his face. Suppose he should not be dead!"

"Flash! for God's sake, hush!" cried George Chester, with unnatural alarm.

"See how you pain your mother! No! he is not cold yet, I did not expect it. But you must retire now, and you must promise me too that you will not cross this threshold again."

"Why may I not keep vigil here for the last night?" she said. "Mary will need you. Let me remain."

"Oh! Lilian, Lilian!" he exclaimed, seizing her hand and half crushing it against his breast—"do you think that in all this, I who loved him as a brother, have not suffered too? If I have not staggered with my cross it was because of my greater strength; not that the burden was lighter to bear. It can only heighten the horror that is on you, and believe me I have weighty reasons for making that

you look at him for the last time now. I have tried to serve you, Lilian, and though it is not the part of disinterestedness to claim a reward, I yet ask you to do this for my sake."

"Yes, George, I do owe you a return," she said, "and in this, believe me, I make it. The thought had come to me that we might do something for him. I was mad to imagine it, I dare say, but though even I must confess the impotency of human assistance to avail him, the bare thought of laying him in his grave, even now, without it, makes my blood run cold. I promise me then that he shall not be buried until this unnatural warmth has given place to the ice of death."

"I swear to you that he shall not. Now, Lilian, go. Madam, for the love of God, take her away!"

"Oh, my child! let us go away from him forever," said the mother, "but do not go with that set, stony face, for it makes me fear that your heart is still harder. Remember we have prayed beside him."

"Yes, I prayed," she said, "but there was no mercy in my petition. I asked only for vengeance on those who helped to bring him to this."

"Lily, Lily, you must ask help of God to-night, or you are lost," sobbed the poor mother. "Doctor, bring her away and tell her that she is breaking my heart."

Dr. Chester took her resolutely by the hand and led her out across the hall and into a remote chamber. "Lilian," he said, "this is your mother beside you. She should be dearer than brother or sister. Look at her, and see how you are paining her."

She raised her full eyes to her mother's face for some moments with the same cold, steel-like glitter; but as she noted its pallid hue, and the deep furrows of care that had not been there in their happier days, they were suffused with tears, and stretching out her arms, she fell sobbing upon her mother's breast.

"Thank God!" murmured the physician, fervently, as he stepped back and closed the door. "She may stand it now until—until the worst is over. Was ever man in such a strait as I am for to-night? But first, I must look to the wife."

Mary had been awake a few hours before, and again talking in the wildness of delirium; but once more the nurse reported her in a sound sleep.

"Again, thank God!" he thought, as he crossed to the room where his lonely vigil was to be kept. "Heaven grant that I may not be disturbed for the few hours that are left. And now for the most painful trial of my whole life."

So saying, he stepped lightly across the threshold, looked anxiously around, placed the key on the inside of the door, which he closed softly, and then locked and bolted it behind him.

There were but few attendants, as may be imagined, at the burial the next morning. Lewis Hartman came in some time before the appointed hour, but he found the workmen had already screwed down the coffin and were ready for its interment.

He bowed formally to Dr. Chester, and followed the little procession out. He expressed no desire to look again on the man whom he had not professed to care a great deal about when living, and the coffin was quickly lowered to its last resting-place. Strong hands shoveled in the earth, the work of a few brief moments with them, and the last duty was paid. While there, as the good people who passed that way were wont to whisper for many a year to

come, lay the body of an foul a murderer as ever suffered for crime.

Persons passing this street got as far to the opposite side as possible, and looked furtively at the house. A profound quiet was seen, however, to reign there. Dr. Chester passed in and out frequently. Mary Thornton might be dead for all that was known to the contrary. The truth was, however, that she was a great deal better. She had been propped up on pillows during the day, and what she said was quite rational.

Lilian had slept several hours the night previous, and seemed rather more like her natural self; but for that and one or two succeeding days, one would have thought that she made a point of avoiding an especial interview with George Chester. Once or twice he had endeavored to draw her out to the door, but had failed of success. On the third evening he saw her standing near the steps of the parlor, looking mournfully up toward Carroll Trevelyan's house, but before he could reach her side, she had hurried in.

He had been alone for a while with his patient, when mother and daughter came in. "I have made arrangements to take Mary to N— to-morrow," he said. "The downward trip can be made without danger, since this change in the weather, and I need advice about her. Dr. Thorpe must be consulted. And besides, you two are not able to nurse her any longer."

"But we are to accompany her. She cannot go alone," said Mrs. Thornton.

Dr. Chester colored painfully. "I—I had not seen the necessity. I had expected to hire nurses for her; you two are exhausted."

"What! mother and sister remain at home, while you are left with the sole charge of her?" said Mrs. Thornton, resolutely. "Doctor, you must be dreaming."

By no means dreaming, if one were to judge from the expression of his face. Yet he seemed most of all annoyed that he could advance no reasonable excuse for persisting in going alone with his charge. He broke quite down in the first effort, and confessing that he had not the strength of it, "was forced, as if to make amends, to embrace the next moment in his plans for departure. The arrangements were soon completed, and on the following day the cottage was indeed closed."

Dr. Chester had already been to N—, and secured a small ready-furnished house in the suburbs. Thither the three women were conducted and at once domiciled.

Dr. Thorpe was called in on the evening of their arrival, and declared Mary in no immediate danger. From this time her improvement was almost hourly perceptible.

There were some peculiarities now observable in George Chester's manner. There was a room in this house which he had kept carefully locked from the day of their arrival. "It contained his drugs," he said, "and he feared to leave them exposed." This might not be unnatural; but when Mrs. Thornton one day proposed to take the key herself and have the room dusted and arranged for him, she grew painfully nervous, and declared that he could not bear the idea of any uninvited person, and especially a woman, crossing the threshold. After this, she of course said nothing further on the subject. But when Mary had been moving about the house for a few days, the mother's admiration may be better imagined than expressed, when chancing one night to cross the hall without a light, she plainly saw her son's widow glide out from the forbidden door, while it was hastily closed, as she could see, by a man's hand, and locked behind her.

"Mary, my child," she exclaimed, "what on earth were you doing in the room. You know Dr. Chester's objection to our going there."

"George is in there himself, mother, and he called me," she said, falteringly. "There was no earthly danger."

"But this time of night, Mary, and alone! What could he want with you? Surely your room would have been the more seamy place, if the conference was one with neither I nor my daughter must be admitted."

"Mother!" exclaimed Mary, drawing herself up proudly, though it was quite perceptible that her bosom was still heaving with all suppressed emotion. "You must give me credit for being in my right mind now, and believe me also that I should not have been there if it had not been in every way proper for me to go. And only stopping long enough to kiss the old lady, quite composedly, she passed on to her own room, and closed the door behind her."

Mrs. Thornton went back into her daughter's apartment, like one dazed by the light. She fell asleep with a vague impression of something that she could not understand, perplexing her to an unusual extent. And fell to dreaming of their old home at Coldham.

Ah, thank Heaven for sleep and dreams! Our dead and worse still our estranged may come back to us then, clad in the warm vestments of life and love! The eye that could thrill us with its tender glance, again quickens our pulse. The lips speak to us in the never-to-be forgotten, careless tones, their breath countenances with our own, they touch ours with a kiss that launches us out into an ocean of divine ecstasy, until we take with us into the sorrows of the day, hushed and holy memories that will lead us to sigh for a higher, more perfect life than this fleeting existence of ours, that is in itself but a dream at last!

As she lay thus awake, as she firmly be-

heard, the door opened, and a shadowy form advanced toward her. As it neared her she would have cried out, but her tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of her mouth. The figure came up close to her, and she saw it was a woman. He has undertaken to help me in the discharge of the only duty left to me in life, and I trust him in that. Do not question me, only believe that my eyes are open. Where is Dr. Chester?

"He is still out," said Mary.

"Then come with me to mine, mother. I have to change my dress."

Mrs. Thornton followed her daughter mechanically into their chamber. Dr. Chester was written upon every feature, but she did not speak again for some moments, in the hope that her daughter would resume the conversation of her own accord.

Lilian, however, seemed entirely absorbed in her own thoughts, and now stood before the mirror, looking at her reflection. Above her, the door was open, and she saw the doctor's face. There was a look of pain, and she felt a sudden pang in her heart.

"Mother, pray be composed," said the girl, while she sprang up and struck a light. "You see there is no one here, and, yes, the door is locked. It was but a disturbed fancy."

"It may seem inexplicable, but I was not asleep. I tell you I saw him as plainly as I see you, mother. The poor woman."

"And yet, there was no light," said Lilian. "Come, mother, this is a weak dream, and, remember, we have need of all our strength."

Her daughter's rigid composure could not fail in part to dispel the illusion, but Mrs. Thornton still had her face in the pillow, and wept bitterly.

"If he can come to me, in sleep," she said, "I would never wish to wake again."

"Ah!" thought Lilian, "she has no regard for me!" and she hardened her heart still more.

The life here was unmarked by any event for some weeks to come. One day Dr. Chester had found Lilian alone, and pleading his long devotion, of which he had given ample proof, entreated her to become his wife.

She had interrupted him with a look that seemed akin to fear.

"Don't tell me of love, can't you hear?" Lilian cried. "George, you must forget me, and you must, my very name is a disgrace."

"If it were possible for that to be so, and you know it is not, there is yet no reason why you may not change your mind," he answered earnestly. "I swear to you, I have no aim or object in life, but to win your heart back to me, and try to atone for all the sorrows you have known."

He had taken her hand, but she broke from him impulsively.

"Don't tell me now! I shall despise you if you persist," she exclaimed, with bitterness. "I am in no mood to listen, I tell you, to the pleadings of love."

"And the longer you cherish these unnatural feelings, the more warped must your nature become, Lilian."

"Hush! For God's sake, hush!"

"My darling!"

She had gone out and slammed the door between them. And George Chester walked away with a heavy sigh.

"But for the knowledge that this must all end soon, I too, should go mad," he said. "Poor Lilian, poor darling, if all these horrors had to be gone over, how doubly harrowing would they be. For her sake, if for none other, I must be guarded."

Lilian Thornton's burdens were none the less easy that she seemed to herself to be required to sustain them almost alone. Mrs. Thornton's anxiety for her daughter had caused that lady to disguise her own feelings until one could scarcely have imagined they had been stirred to any considerable degree. Dr. Chester, with the philosophy of strong and resolute natures, often assumed a cheerfulness, which no one but himself could tell how far he was from feeling, and Mary-Mary, upon whom the blow should have fallen most durably, was really the first to rally.

The door came back to her cheeks, and elasticity to her tread. Even Lilian had looked at her more than once in incredulous astonishment.

But now if there were mysteries in the little household, they were not confined to Dr. Chester alone.

His anxiety for Lilian daily increased, through fear of being started at any moment, she had now taken to going out on the streets alone, and was frequently absent for whole hours—sometimes even until after midnight.

The mother remonstrated.

"Let me have my way without questioning. In that case, I only hope for you, she said, and believing for a while, they forbore to molest her."

One evening, however, when she had remained out even later than usual, and her mother's anxiety had increased to positive alarm, the latter, on going to the door, beheld her daughter coming up under the lamp-light accompanied by a man, who was evidently not Dr. Chester.

The man looked across at the house just then, and seeing the figure in the door, turned abruptly away. Lilian came on quickly, opened the little gate and entered.

"My child, how can you have the heart to alarm me so? And who was that stranger but now in your company? You must tell me at once."

"Mother, mother!" cried the girl, "you dare not question me like that! Do you think any motive that might influence other women—women of the world—could control my actions? Think me guilty of conspiracies, schemes, plots, anything that a man might dare, but nothing to which a woman would have to stoop."

"Then you can still tell me in whose company my daughter can trust herself at this late hour?"

"He has the greater faith to trust himself in mine," she answered, with a bitter smile. "And yet I may tell you. Only, if you ever wish to look upon my face again, do not let George Chester know. Mother, swear to me that you will not think me mad, that you will not consult him of all men in the world. I am calm—at least I am deliberate, you know. You must swear to keep my secret."

"Anything, my daughter, if I may but win your confidence."

Then, mother, mark me, it is in this secret from Mary and from—

"Chester. The man who came with me to the gate was one you already know."

"His name?"

"Lewis Hartman."

"Lilian, why is this?" cried her mother, "you alarm me so. I am persuaded, and his name has already been coupled unkindly with yours."

"Fah!" exclaimed the girl, "the low gossip of a scandalous clown. I had forgotten that. And, mother, Lewis Hartman is my friend."

"Your brother speak of him. Ask George Chester his opinion of that man."

"I tell you George must not know," urged Lilian. "Once more, mother, I bid you forget that I am a woman. He has undertaken to help me in the discharge of the only duty left to me in life, and I trust him in that. Do not question me, only believe that my eyes are open. Where is Dr. Chester?"

"He is still out," said Mary.

"Then come with me to mine, mother. I have to change my dress."

Mrs. Thornton followed her daughter mechanically into their chamber. Dr. Chester was written upon every feature, but she did not speak again for some moments, in the hope that her daughter would resume the conversation of her own accord.

Lilian, however, seemed entirely absorbed in her own thoughts, and now stood before the mirror, looking at her reflection. Above her, the door was open, and she saw the doctor's face. There was a look of pain, and she felt a sudden pang in her heart.

"Mother, pray be composed," said the girl, while she sprang up and struck a light. "You see there is no one here, and, yes, the door is locked. It was but a disturbed fancy."

"It may seem inexplicable, but I was not asleep. I tell you I saw him as plainly as I see you, mother. The poor woman."

"And yet, there was no light," said Lilian. "Come, mother, this is a weak dream, and, remember, we have need of all our strength."

Her daughter's rigid composure could not fail in part to dispel the illusion, but Mrs. Thornton still had her face in the pillow, and wept bitterly.

"If he can come to me, in sleep," she said, "I would never wish to wake again."

"Ah!" thought Lilian, "she has no regard for me!" and she hardened her heart still more.

The life here was unmarked by any event for some weeks to come. One day Dr. Chester had found Lilian alone, and pleading his long devotion, of which he had given ample proof, entreated her to become his wife.

She had interrupted him with a look that seemed akin to fear.

"Don't tell me of love, can't you hear?" Lilian cried. "George, you must forget me, and you must, my very name is a disgrace."

"If it were possible for that to be so, and you know it is not, there is yet no reason why you may not change your mind," he answered earnestly. "I swear to you, I have no aim or object in life, but to win your heart back to me, and try to atone for all the sorrows you have known."

He had taken her hand, but she broke from him impulsively.

"Don't tell me now! I shall despise you if you persist," she exclaimed, with bitterness. "I am in no mood to listen, I tell you, to the pleadings of love."

"And the longer you cherish these unnatural feelings, the more warped must your nature become, Lilian."

"Hush! For God's sake, hush!"

"My darling!"

She had gone out and slammed the door between them. And George Chester walked away with a heavy sigh.

"But for the knowledge that this must all end soon, I too, should go mad," he said. "Poor Lilian, poor darling, if all these horrors had to be gone over, how doubly harrowing would they be. For her sake, if for none other, I must be guarded."

Lilian Thornton's burdens were none the less easy that she seemed to herself to be required to sustain them almost alone. Mrs. Thornton's anxiety for her daughter had caused that lady to disguise her own feelings until one could scarcely have imagined they had been stirred to any considerable degree. Dr. Chester, with the philosophy of strong and resolute natures, often assumed a cheerfulness, which no one but himself could tell how far he was from feeling, and Mary-Mary, upon whom the blow should have fallen most durably, was really the first to rally.

The door came back to her cheeks, and elasticity to her tread. Even Lilian had looked at her more than once in incredulous astonishment.

But now if there were mysteries in the little household, they were not confined to Dr. Chester alone.

His anxiety for Lilian daily increased, through fear of being started at any moment, she had now taken to going out on the streets alone, and was frequently absent for whole hours—sometimes even until after midnight.

The mother remonstrated.

"Let me have my way without questioning. In that case, I only hope for you, she said, and believing for a while, they forbore to molest her."

One evening, however, when she had remained out even later than usual, and her mother's anxiety had increased to positive alarm, the latter, on going to the door, beheld her daughter coming up under the lamp-light accompanied by a man, who was evidently not Dr. Chester.

The man looked across at the house just then, and seeing the figure in the door, turned abruptly away. Lilian came on quickly, opened the little gate and entered.

"My child, how can you have the heart to alarm me so? And who was that stranger but now in your company? You must tell me at once."

"Mother, mother!" cried the girl, "you dare not question me like that! Do you think any motive that might influence other women—women of the world—could control my actions? Think me guilty of conspiracies, schemes, plots, anything that a man might dare, but nothing to which a woman would have to stoop."

"Then you can still tell me in whose company my daughter can trust herself at this late hour?"

"He has the greater faith to trust himself in mine," she answered, with a bitter smile. "And yet I may tell you. Only, if you ever wish to look upon my face again, do not let George Chester know. Mother, swear to me that you will not think me mad, that you will not consult him of all men in the world. I am calm—at least I am deliberate, you know. You must swear to keep my secret."

"Anything, my daughter, if I may but win your confidence."

Then, mother, mark me, it is in this secret from Mary and from—

"Chester. The man who came with me to the gate was one you already know."

"His name?"

"Lewis Hartman."

"Lilian, why is this?" cried her mother, "you alarm me so. I am persuaded, and his name has already been coupled unkindly with yours."

"Fah!" exclaimed the girl, "the low gossip of a scandalous clown. I had forgotten that. And, mother, Lewis Hartman is my friend."

"Let me take up her snapper first, mother. She has been out, and if very tired, is, I dare say, none the less hungry."

Mary had already taken a roll and a bird upon her own plate with every appearance of infinite relish.

Mrs. Thornton looked at her coldly.

"No," she answered. "Lilian had been sitting in the room with that no one should disturb her, and that she herself would return in time."

The remainder of the meal was finished in silence. Dr. Chester had hung out his sign here, and before he had quite finished there was a call for him at the door.

"Has your wife so much to do about this?" he asked, looking quite anxiously at Mrs. Thornton, as he turned toward the door.

She answered promptly in the negative. And he took up his hat, and passed out at the door. Just beyond the gate he saw a man loitering about the railing, as he turned in that direction, the person drew back, and began to move away with rapid strides.

"He evidently did not wish to see me," mused George, "and yet was loitering about my premises. I have half a mind to overtake him, and request him to enlighten his moonlight meditations elsewhere."

This would not have been so easy a task as he might have supposed. The man was Lewis Hartman, and of all men in the world he had every reason to avoid George Chester.

Mrs. Thornton's apprehensions for Lilian were easily quieted, and she withdrew to her own room. Mrs. Thornton promising to come in after a while, and sit with her until bedtime.

In the mean time, Lilian had donned her rappee, and slipped out a side entrance. George Chester would have followed himself, but he had been so hurried at that moment, and recognizing Lewis Hartman as the man he had chased from his door, he had taken Lilian, taking his arm and walking away in the distance. But Dr. Chester was, fortunately or unfortunately, not beyond the gates of all that was passing here; and Lilian and her escort moved on for some moments in profound silence.

The former was the first to speak.

"You are quite sure he will be there?"

"You know my reasons for thinking so," answered Lilian. "I was in his office when he sent his boy off with a note to Miss Nina Alvarez—as I saw while I lay before me; and I showed you her answer, which he carelessly threw upon his desk, and which I was fortunate enough to secure, while he stepped into his study. And he has a watch and seal so near his, that you may touch him with your fan."

"You have ascertained that she is really as wealthy as she is beautiful and accomplished?"

"Beyond all conjecture. Her jewels tonight will tell you that, and you will see her in undisguised admiration. He will be the most highly honored of all; but you will see how composed he can be. The man has an air as though he were born to the purple."

"And yet she shall wear the willow—as I do!" said the girl, but he had not time to answer, and he told her to wait.

"Most probably he does not," answered Hartman, coolly. "Men devoted to ambitious pursuits, as he is, will hardly find room in their narrow souls for any selfish affection. I should not advise you, as an beautiful woman as that, will flatter his vanity."

"But he must love her. I want him to love her," she half-hissed from between her beautiful teeth—as though volition on her part must secure her object—of disappointment.

"Is it not strange that realizing this, you cannot feel more for me?" he ventured to say, in half-mournful, half-tender tones.

She straightened herself up until her head was as level as a sword, and, with a flashing angry smile in every feature, she said:

"Are you trying to force me to turn off from you, and find my way back home alone?" she cried. "I have told you that I would!"

"Forgive me!" he pleaded, with bowed head, as he said. "I want to see you, to remember for the future. My only wish is to serve you, and I would count my heart's blood to do that. Come, I hear the orchestra playing. Let us press on, and you will behold your enemy, in all the proud consciousness of a brilliant future just opening before him."

"Nemesis is on his track. Let us see if he cannot be overtaken, and dragged down."

No other word was spoken, and they had now approached the public entrance of the fashionable theatre on A street. The lights flashed out brilliant, and the unknown woman, who had been so far away, seemed to the bystanders a very Jumbo.

The band played a gushing overture as she passed quickly on to her seat, but she did not hear it. She might have caught the query, taken up on all sides, "Who is she?" but her heart was far otherwise engaged. Lewis Hartman heard it with infinite relish, and bent over her with an air that escaped her, but which he did not intend the audience should misunderstand.

Lilian Thornton's bosom was heaving, and a fine, like that of a consuming fever, burning upon her cheeks.

Almost simultaneously with her a couple had entered the seats just to her left. For one instant the finger of her right hand was pressed over her heart as though to stay a spasm of pain, and then she looked up. And there, before her, sat Earle Templeton, smiling proudly down upon a beautiful woman, all in a shower of golden hair, at his side.

CHAPTER XX.

NINA ALVAREZ.

"A woman that no man living with a heart in his bosom could fail to love."

This was Lilian Thornton's joyful, but involuntary comment, as she looked at her.

An undershirt of pure white Lyons silk, a low tunic of pale blue satin, such as rarely do not appear in the looms of Antwerp, covered with English point lace, and looped at regular intervals with jewels, each of which the pretty actress just coming upon the stage would have regarded as a fortune. A collar of pearls and diamonds, that even the most avowed admirers of her admirers might have wished back in the depths of the ocean because they covered so much of a throat—fairer, with its sea-shell pinkness, than all pearls; and a coronet with jewels that the queen of England might have worn. These were a part of the outward adornments of the woman, while the sculptured face and form, with the soul that breathed through them, were beyond the power of tongue or pencil to portray.

"No young too, and so little known here," thought Lilian, as she gazed.

"Fresh from the schools, with her Spanish blood and her ethereal, uncharacteristic beauty; and that he should have had the first chance at her affections. What if after all there should be no means to separate them, and he should win and wear the prize in spite of me?" her white teeth were set, and the breath came in gasps.

"If that should be the case, God help me! I should murder her."

Whether Lilian Thornton would ever have executed this terrible threat or not, had circumstances seemed to require it for the furtherance of her wishes, we are unable to say. His mouth before them lived not a gender or more womanly woman, one who would have felt a deeper horror at the thought of crime, and yet, of just such stuff are formed the Charlotte Gordays, and two-thirds of the fearless assassins in the world of real or fancied wrongs and attempted retribution.

Looking at the actress as she did, for the play had no attractions for her, she fancied that she could distinctly read more than a passing interest in the look with which this lovely girl lifted her eyes over and over to the face of her escort; but to her, as to the other Earle Templeton's face was a mask. Whatever he might feel, his attention was all that could be read in his manner. His grand, strong face had no softening, caught no light as he returned toward the door.

Deeply absorbed in the study of his features, Lilian failed to observe that she had attracted the attention of the young lady at his side.

"Señor Templeton, look!" said Miss Alvarez, in clear distinct tones. "There is a beautiful woman on your left, who is she?"

Templeton turned slowly. Lilian's eyes were fixed upon the stage, but her ears were still strained to hear.

"She might be pretty if one could confess any other type of beauty than her own," he said, in the low, musical tone peculiar to him. "And I regret my ignorance, even of her name, since it prevents me from being able to inform you."

Other conversation of a less personal nature fell on her ear, and still she gave them her undivided attention even while she felt constrained to address some remarks to her escort. She was glad, however, when the curtain fell, and they arose to go.

"You do not wish to follow them?" said Hartman.

"Of course not to-night, but we must keep careful watch—of him, and I of her, from to-day. She is faultlessly beautiful, and I have no longer any fears; he will, he must, be hers."

"He did not recognize you?"

"No. From my knowledge of the man I was sure he would not; so much the better; but she will certainly know me when she sees me again."

"You will see her again, then?"

"Yes, when my plans are matured."

Again under the starlight, they hurried on in silence.

"I shall pass Althor's corner to-morrow evening at eight," said Lilian, as she reached their postern gate. "If you have anything to say to me, join me there."

"I will; good-night."

She felt weary and depressed in no ordinary degree. The strong restraint continually put upon her feelings, was beginning to tell upon her health.

She looked up at George Chester's window, and saw a faint light burning there. She came to this good idea to-night, because she remembered her noble kindness with all the gratitude a lost creature like me knows how to feel," she said, speaking with more distinctness, "not that I expected her to be in any wise connected with the friends of the poor young lady that I want rescued from the clutches of such as have ruined me."

"Not very long ago I fell in crossing the street, it was before I had my heavy sickness, and I was weak and dizzy, and my carriage was rushing by me as I dropped."

"She looked out, and seeing me lying on the ground, she stopped, and came to my help, like the true and noble lady she is."

"Nor did she turn from me with shrinking or disgust, when she found that I was the miserable wretch I am. She offered me help, and showed me the way back to a decent life, promising to make it easy for me, and only try to save me from the clutches of such as have ruined me."

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BEYOND JORDAN.

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

And they came to him, mothers of Judah.

Dark-eyed and in splendor of hair,

Beating down over shoulders of beauty,

And home half hidden, half bare,

And they brought him their babes, and brought him,

And he looked with exultant air,

To show the brown cheeks they brought him,

With baby hands laid in their hair.

Then reaching his hands, he said, slowly,

"For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

For such is my kingdom; and, and, and,

Not a light was in view; the great brown structure seemed, like its neighbors, to enclose only peaceful slumbers within its spacious walls, and when the friends stood for a moment contemplating it, the judge almost doubted the possibility of Jim's having carried out his design.

"Yes, the window iron is open," said Eugene, returning from a hurried inspection of the narrow side-passage leading up to the garden. "Follow me; I still have the key to the verandah door."

In a few moments, and with the least possible sound, they had divested themselves of their boots, entered the door that opened first into a conservatory, and thence into the family breakfast-room.

Grooping in the darkness, they ascended the main staircase, and thence gained the second floor before they encountered anything on which to found a suspicion of the presence of robbers in the house.

Just at the turn of the third story stairs a gleam of light shot toward their way, and they moved back in silence and passed breathlessly till they perceived a young girl of rare beauty, who from her dress and appearance seemed to have dropped asleep while gazing on a picture on the opposite wall.

Her hand still supported her cheek, and only that her head had fallen forward, and that she would seem to have been watching the uncertain light shooting and flickering over the beautiful face of the picture.

As Heatherton ascended the stairs he had fancied once that a figure flitted by him, but attributing it to his excited imagination, dismissed the idea.

Now he plainly saw the same figure crouching behind the sofa on which the sleeper lay, and recognized it at the same glance as Lucy Barton's, though her face seemed, when revealed by the lantern's gleam, to belong to his extensive palor to the dead rather than the living.

As all three of them, in their concealment at the door, became aware of these facts, they mutually signalled each other as to their course of action, and had already made themselves in order for attack, when their design was interrupted by the sudden appearance of a silent figure all in white at the farther door.

They saw her plainly, and Eugene caught his breath at the sight, for he recognized Mrs. Blanchard in her character of sleep-walker, and her fixed eyes and staking movements brought back to his mind the first time he had beheld her, and the bright and gloom her head had spread over his boyish life.

But not only did they see her, the boy nimbly sorting the contents of the writing-desk in the corner facing her, spied the figure also, and uttered a smothered gasp of terror as she came slowly but steadily toward him.

She was under the picture on which the sleeping girl had been gazing, and she raised her stiff, automaton-like hand toward it, when Pat's gasping cry attracted Eugene's attention. He, too, looked up, and became deadly, awfully white at the sight.

Still the arms rose in their strange, spectre-like motion, and he muttered an impression expressive of terror and seized his pistol.

"Hold!" shouted Eugene, in wild alarm. It was too late; the hand whizzed through the air, and the white figure and the picture-frame crashed to the floor together!

Lights and servants only added disorder to the terrible scene.

Jim, the housebreaker, escaped by knocking down Judge Lester and firing again at Heatherton as they strove to arrest his progress.

Little Pat never attempted to stir, but crouched in a corner, surveying the scene with wide, dilating eyes; while poor young Violet, awakened to sudden dread and terror, clung round her new-found brother's neck and cried—

"What was it? Oh, who was that dreadful man that fled away? And why does mamma lie so still upon her face on the floor yonder?"

They took her away, striving as best they could to hide the full extent of the painful truth from her, but she was too much for her sensitive young heart, and before daylight she lay in a raging fever, watched over by Heatherton and poor Lucy Barton.

Poor Lucy's object, as she afterward explained, had been to reach one of the bed chambers and admonish some of the family to resist the robbers; but she had wandered about in the dark till she caught sight of Violet asleep in her brother's deserted room, and she had crept in there, determined to save the child by the sacrifice of her own life, if need be.

Mrs. Blanchard's life was extinct when she was raised from the floor on which she had fallen, carrying Eugene's picture of the girl whose life she had endeavored to poison, with her.

Jim Hall's shot, fired in terror of what seemed to him a ghostly apparition, had done its work, and her busy brain and pitiless heart had ceased to plot forever.

In her dead hand was found Eugene's mother's work—the paper with the family pedigree, proofs of descent and secrets all perfect, as she herself in a state of somnambulism had removed them from the locked and hidden behind the picture of Marian in Eugene's room.

Thus her death disclosed a secret her life could not have revealed.

When Eugene left the desolated home of empty splendor for his friends and happy abode was true friends that morning, it was with a bowed and humbled spirit, from which loathing and resentment had passed away at the sight of retributive justice.

Mr. Blanchard had left the city some days before, the steamer, as it was announced, to cross the ocean and make a short continental tour for his failing health; but as he never returned, it appeared that he had suspected the closing influences that surrounded his plotting and scheming wife, and being unwilling to face a denunciation, had secured such funds as were available and departed on their strength.

The body of the murdered woman lay properly cared for, in the great house, that beneficent could never be a place of peace or joy to Eugene, who determined as he drove away to the Lester's cheerful home to dispose of it and his miserable memories and associations, never to be linked again to either.

There was something more awaited him on his arrival—the interests of that eventful night were not yet over, and Mrs. Lester, looking pale and worn from sleep-

less excitement, yet calm and gravely cheerful in its results, met him at the door and took his hand tenderly in hers.

"There is some one here, whom I might keep a secret until you have both had rest and refreshment, my dear boy," she said, with a quiet smile, "but I believe you and she will be able to understand the soft-hearted impulse that urges me to the joyous at once. Come this way, Marian, my darling girl, here is your happy lover!"

And not waiting to hear the poor artist's incredulous cry of joy, or behold the fainting girl clasped rapturously to his breast, the judge's lady discreetly retired, leaving an explanation until joyful surprise gave place to calm delight.

Then Marian told her lover, who assured her between every sentence of the impossibility of any earthly consideration dividing his love from her, as long as her heart was true to him, how dread of her poor sister's misfortune, being misinterpreted, had in part influenced her renunciation of his love; but that fear lest his enemies might increase their persecution, if she continued to meet him, had been her strongest motive.

Making light of her own trials, she dwelt chiefly on her poor sister's undesigned misery, of which she had been not fully informed through Molly's agency, and in a concise and hasty way brought her story to the scene of the ring, which she explained as part of the plot to trap her to the empty house.

From thence she had been carried, she did not know how, into a comfortable room next door, where a colored woman kindly watched over her, until Mrs. Lester came and brought her home to this dear, charming place, taking care to relieve her mind by sending to inform her mother and brother of her whereabouts.

She knew nothing of Violet's death, nor Molly—and concluded by falling again in tears of thankful joy on her lover's breast.

"We have Lucy back again, and the dear lady tells me your right to your own name and property is quite established, and that your dear young sister whom I never long to see is now in your care, and oh, dear Eugene, what more is there to wish for?"

"Nothing, nothing!" murmured the grateful lover, and he did not mar that happy hour by narrating the scene that had preceded it, so Marian was for the moment spared the knowledge of two violent deaths.

There was yet enough of care and trouble in Marian's path to remind her that there must always be earthly thorns among the most heavenly roses.

That night of rational but most excited feeling was poor Lucy's last conscious one for many a weary day.

With morning's light came strong symptoms of brain fever, which rapidly increased, and the return of evening found her in a raving delirium.

Marian took her place at her bedside as nurse, and Violet, after her mother's death, seemed to forget her own sorrow in assisting the devoted sister in her loving vigils.

Tender forethought saved the delicate girl from a knowledge of how her mother had died; she had often been attacked with spasms of the heart, and they showed her to think that one of those had proved fatal.

The mourned quietly, but not less, and soon developed with unusually rapid growth, into a fair and blooming womanhood.

But that was some years later, all the tents of the dreary past had faded out in the joyous present then, and poor Molly's gloomy seed sown in blood, had borne fair and fragrant fruit.

The unhappy creature lay under the same sod that covered the body of the man who died by her hand, for she had been dead next morning at daylight, lying stiff and stark in death on her cold bed, and thus it fell out that according to Eugene's wish, Lucy's miserable husband was laid in his last sleep by the side of his unhappy murderers.

Poor Lucy knew not and never knew how he came to his end; when she recovered at last it was to a high and holy life of noble deeds and blessed works.

She shared her sister's home and wealth, and the poor loved her, and little children blessed her name.

But Lucy never married again, that part of life was over for her, still she was not gloomy, nor did she shrink from the sight of other's joy; on the contrary, when as years went by and Violet became a lovely woman, Max Heatherton sought and won her heart and hand, Lucy was the one who dressed her for the bride, and compared her to Marian, whose maternal beauty was not dimmed by contact with domestic life, but still more prominent to the gaze of her adoring husband and sister.

"I think Violet is the most beautiful bride I ever saw, except Marian," Lucy said.

"Always except Marian," cried Eugene, "she has no peer as wife."

"Or sister," cried Lucy.

"Or daughter either," remarked Mrs. Barton, who was one of the easily moulded kind of women who take their form and color from surrounding circumstances, and in her present effluence adorned the son-in-law she had been bribed to abuse and spy upon by his enemy, the dead and forgotten Mrs. Blanchard.

Judge and Mrs. Lester considered themselves the adopted parents of Eugene and Marian, and the young people in their turn, regarded the noble couple with the grateful tenderness of son and daughter.

Allan's new-born independence of spirit and earnest energy of character for a time resisted all patronage, but much aid may be given in a secret way, and young Mr. Barton's unprecedented rise and success in life could only be explained by the influence of his generous friends and relatives.

Eugene gave his mother-in-law a beautiful home of her own, and in it lived Allan and Lucy; while Violet before her marriage, vibrated between Judge Lester's, her brother's and the Bartons' residence, finding in each a loving welcome and bringing sunshine in her presence.

Eugene had made her legally his sister, and shared his wealth with her, at first much to Heatherton's objections, but finding it in no wise interfered with his suit, the good doctor submitted to good fortune very graciously.

Lucy undertook the care and reformation of little Pat, with such fervent faith and determination that it is a comfort to think she was not disappointed, and Allan has seen him practically established in business with every prospect of success.

Old Rosetta also was cared for, but Meg Worth and her companion, Jim Hall, never crossed the path of the happy family, and nothing occurred in their future lives to remind them of that dark and dreary period, when such wretched creatures exerted an influence over their existence.

THE END.

66 The Paris police were recently ordered to shave off their imperials. They looked too much like a relic of Napoleonism.

The Minister's Choice.

A TRUE STORY.

BY MARK EDWARDS.

Mrs. Selinda Black was in a fever of delight.

"The new minister was here to-day, Liddy," she said to her sister, "and engaged board. He is so handsome. Now, if you could only get your cap for him and catch him, it would be grand. A minister's wife, Liddy! How would you like that?"

Mrs. Selinda Robbins implored as daintily as she could, and affected hopefulness of ever achieving such a success matrimonial, while an involuntary start of surprise and a quick, eager lighting of her eyes proclaimed that she was secretly desiring nothing less.

She was not less than thirty years of age, of large, coarse person, with an innate vulgarity evident in her whole appearance. She was richly dressed, but not in good taste—refinement was wanting, and the show of means she endeavored to make was false, for her income was quite limited. But she lived board-free with her sister, and expended most of her money on her personal adornment. Both women were socially ambitious, and aspired to stand high in their circle and set.

They kept one servant, a sweet-faced, intelligent American girl, who had found it impossible on account of her suffering health to support herself by her needle, and therefore had bravely undertaken housework. She had come under the fairest promises to Mrs. Black, but had been compelled to endure many indignities, for both her mistress and Mrs. Robbins felt her gentleness and refinement a constant reproach to their own pretensions. They, therefore, delighted to show her that she was only a servant-girl.

The young minister came—a modest, quiet-minded man, whose cheerful gravity was wonderfully winning to all. Mrs. Robbins felt her utmost to gain his favor, but failed in making herself as agreeable to him as she desired. Though always courteous to her, he was instinctively repelled by her vanity and fawning adulation.

It was days after his arrival at Mrs. Black's that Mr. Emory obtained his first glimpse of Lucy Gray. He had been conscious of a gentle-moving presence in the kitchen, and had wondered how it was that his landlady's servant kept herself so entirely out of the range of his vision. But Lucy had received her instructions, which were not to appear in Mr. Emory's presence during meal time, as he had given Mrs. Black to understand (so she said) that he disliked the attendance of a domestic at the table.

"I'll wait on him myself," said Mrs. Black, "which I wouldn't do for anybody but a minister."

And Lucy, thinking that a minister must be a very superior and extraordinary person indeed—far, far above herself—was careful not to intrude.

The truth was that both Mrs. Black and her sister were afraid that Lucy's deaf and dumb condition would be a disqualification for her to be observed by Mr. Emory, to the admiration of such unusual efficiency. But of course two persons—even if one be servant and the other guest—cannot long remain under the same roof without seeing and learning something of each other.

Mr. Emory found Lucy in the hall one day, and guessed that she must be the slightly mysterious servant who had been fitting so softly about upstairs and down, but heretofore invisible.

She was dressed in the plainest attire, but at a glance the young minister saw the clean white collar and the general neatness of her appearance.

He smiled and spoke a pleasant word—recognizing her as a human being. She blushed and started also—the word of greeting was so unexpected.

"What is the young lady's name whom you have employed?" inquired Mr. Emory of Mrs. Black, the first opportunity he had afterward.

"The young lady!" answered that amazed individual to herself. "Lucy Gray," she answered aloud.

"A sweet name and a pretty owner," observed the young minister. "Her face is very interesting."

"The idea!" thought Mrs. Black, quite shocked. "Of a young minister commenting in that way on the appearance of a servant girl!" Aloud she continued, "She is a presumptuous piece, sir; I have great difficulty in teaching her to know her place."

"She surely has not a forward and impertinent look," returned Mr. Emory. "If I ever read refinement and modesty in a contented I did in hers. Is she not very intelligent?"

How surprised it was to have this youthful reverend express so much interest in a mere servant-girl!

"Oh, very," answered Mrs. Black with acerbity. "I wonder she does not offer herself as an instructor."

Her listener caught the sneer.

"I am sure I would be glad to be rid of her," Mrs. Black went on to say. "Which was now the truth, though she did not explain why."

In her secret annoyance at hearing Lucy so favorably spoken of, Selinda spoke more bitterly than was prudent, and failed to observe the expression of disapprobation that came over Mr. Emory's face as he heard her sarcastic utterances.

"You speak of Lucy's intelligence, Mr. Emory," she again resumed, thinking now to make a grand stroke against the innocent subject of their remarks, "but when yesterday I complained of *her* she really did not know what I meant."

The young minister laughed heartily.

"That is refreshing," he said, "I am glad that she confines herself to English."

And then he remembered that he had only the day before heard Mrs. Black speak of a certain fruit as "quincies."

Mr. Emory's interest in Lucy Gray grew steadily from the hour of their first meeting.

In vain did Mrs. Robbins attempt to blind him to the gentle girl's attractions, in vain did she endeavor to monopolize his attention. In spite of all the efforts of herself and sister to prevent it, the minister would speak pleasant words to Lucy Gray—kind, encouraging words that were very grateful to her.

He found in her all that in woman is most lovely—grace, modesty, intelligence and rare sweetness of temper and disposition. The matter at last became alarming to Mrs. Black and Miss Robbins.

"Next there will be unpleasant talk," said the latter. "Such intimacy on the part of an unmarried minister is really shameful. What will folks think if they get to know it? Of course Mr. Emory means nothing, and least of all harm; yet it is not the proper thing. You must turn the girl off, Selinda. Why, last night I actually heard Mr. Emory ask her to sing for him."

"And did she do it?"

"You know she can sing," whispered Miss Robbins, as if she feared the fact might get out.

"But did she?"

"Yes," admitted the other reluctantly. "Horror! Not in the parlor! Lucy would not dare to enter the parlor for that purpose."

"Why doesn't Mr. Emory ask you to sing, Liddy?" quavered Mrs. Black. "Do draw him on; there is nothing at all in the way, I understand, except this presumptuous girl, for whom of course he does not care a penny beyond a transient interest he takes in her pretty ways."

"Clear her out," demanded Miss Robbins. "I hate her anyhow."

"She goes to-morrow," declared Mrs. Black, firmly. "She won't trouble us any more."

The next morning Lucy Gray with weeping eyes and the saddest face went from the house of Mrs. Black, discharged. She did not want to leave, unpleasant as her lot there had in many respects become, but she must go, for she had no other home, and she thought a change argued against her. Mrs. Black had the name of being a good mistress, and therefore the fault would be considered Lucy's. Wallace Emory went up to Mrs. Gray's modest but tasteful home that evening. He asked for Lucy.

"Lucy came, somewhat wondering, and they sat in the little parlor alone. She felt sad, and could with difficulty summon up her usual cheerfulness."

For awhile they talked on various subjects, ignoring the subject of her dismissal from Mrs. Black's. Mr. Emory interested her by his unassuming manner, speaking so kindly and tenderly and sympathetically, that the humiliated girl felt that at least one heart in the world must be large and warm and charitable.

At length he said with some abruptness: "You left your place at Mrs. Black's, is that right?"

"I was dismissed, sir," she stammered, with a look of pain.

"And I know why, Lucy. It was not your fault, but mine, that caused your discharge."

"Your, sir?"

"Yes, mine," he said, quietly. "But to make things all right again, what do you say to my finding you another place?"

"I would be very grateful to you, sir," replied she, innocently.

"But you would have to stay for life if you went," he continued, with a look that seemed to pierce her heart.

"For life?" she repeated, wondering.

"Yes, Lucy; but I would try to make it a good place—one you would never want to leave."

There was something in his face gloriously suggestive. Lucy seemed fairly to glow with joy, but she was too shy to say so, as if at the absurdity of her wild sweet thought.

"He my wife, Lucy," said Wallace Emory, in tender, entreating words, with a joyous seriousness that showed his truth.

"Oh, Mr. Emory!" she gasped, uncertain of her reply.

"I am in earnest, Lucy."

"But—but you would not marry me, sir?"

"If you do or can love me, I will."

Already she did that, unconscious of the fact till now, but the tender, tearful glory of her eyes, the quivering of her pure face and the trembling of her light form, revealed all Wallace Emory cared to know.

Four months later there was a wedding in the parish, and Lucy Gray became the young minister's bride. Many people of course had wondered when it first became known that he had chosen her for his wife, but to all but Mrs. Black and Miss Robbins the matter became clear enough at last. To them it always remained incomprehensible—at least they would not admit that it was not.

To-day Wallace Emory and his sweet wife, beloved of all, live and labor as only hearts truly united and nature truly congenial can.

Freshmen Initiations at Yale College.

BY CHARLES HOLLAND KIDDER.

A most significant evidence of the advance of civilization and humanity may be found in the announcement that "The faculty of Yale College have prohibited freshmen society initiations for this and all succeeding years. To those who are acquainted with the practices of the practice thus abolished, this may seem an unwarranted exercise of authority on the part of the Yale faculty. There are many, however, who read this statement with feelings similar to those of graduates of our military and naval schools, when hearing of measures resorted to by the faculty in putting down 'hazing' at Annapolis and West Point.

The freshmen society initiation at Yale, like many admissions to secret societies, was a side-splitting farce to the initiators, and a solemn reality to the initiated. This ceremony was observed, at least before 1865, the two rival societies, after using strenuous efforts to capture and 'pledge' freshmen for their respective organizations, joined their forces on 'initiation night,' hired a public hall, and issued tickets of invitation which were freely distributed to outsiders, both with and without the college. No one can, therefore, be guilty of breach of trust by describing the main features of this interesting and impressive ceremony.

Before their introduction into the hall, the neophytes were confined in a small, dark, unventilated room, the air of which, assisted by the smoke of smoldering pipes and cigars, rapidly reached a condition which made the breathers almost enjoy the occupants of the Black Hole of Calcutta. Two sentries, dressed in diabolical uniforms, kept the door and called out the victims separately by using the following dreadful formula, "Ad cruciatum (to the torture), John Smith." John Smith, on reaching the door, was seized by Satanic attendants, blindfolded, and hurried up a pair of stairs into the hall. Here, he remarked, an aristocratic element is observable, for the members of the nobility not only escaped without further inconvenience, but were allotted a convenient spot whence they could behold and enjoy the tortures of their less favored brethren. The patent of this nobility was conferred by the possession of a spare ten-dollar bill to be expended for a supper for two upper-classmen (junior or seniors). The happy members of upper-tenness were seized by friendly hands on entering the hall, their eyes were freed from the bandages, their coats were taken off, turned inside out and put on again, and the turncoats protected by their handsomeness were speedily removed to the place of safety above mentioned.

All who were engaged in initiating those whom speak or impetuosity forced to submit to the operation were disguised. Devils and satyrs, Turks and Chinamen

were there, and some were decked with war paint and feathers in a style which would have forced the late Captain Jack A. Co., of Modoc notoriety, to acknowledge them as men and brethren. Hideous masks of various kinds abounded, and uniformly were reserved in only one point—no one could be recognized! The sophomores had good reasons for wishing to conceal their identity. They incurred the risk of being called to account for any special cruelty in using the instruments of torture which were scattered through the brightly-lighted hall, surrounded by stony-hearted barbarians, eager to behold the writhings of their victims. Near the door was an inclined plane, leading up to a platform raised eight or ten feet above the floor. The victim, blindfolded, was led up this, and forced to jump from the platform. He was caught upon a stout piece of canvas, held by ten or more strong sophomores, and received a tossing fully equal to that given to Sanchez Pansa at the wayside inn. Upon one occasion the bandage slipped off from the eyes of a candidate for initiation, just as he was standing on the inclined plane. The student, shocked at finding himself surrounded by yelling demons, the glare of the lights, and the diabolical countenances looking down upon the blanket-towers, were too much for him—he fainted, and was spared further sufferings.

The modes of torture were as various as the imaginations of the tormentors. One (one at a time, he it understood, here and elsewhere, each one being separately attended to). This was afterward closed, and attendant imps then pounded on the outside, producing to the unhappy occupants the effect of concentrated thunder. The victim was then permitted to sit down, and upon doing so, found cold, if not pleasant, quarters in a tub of water. Some were put into a hollow wooden wheel, which was then rolled briskly along, while the "inside passenger" executed involuntary somersaults. The most ingenious of the tortures was the mock guillotine. The knife of this was made of tin, and was caught by a spring a few inches above the neck of the victim, who was fastened under it, face upward, and with unopened eyes. If he did not know the secret, he suffered all the agonies of a genuine execution; and the gravity of the punishment made the illusion so perfect, that many were seriously alarmed, and apparently thought that their doom was irrevocably sealed.

The feeling between Yale students and the general body of those inhabitants of New Haven who are neither graduates nor undergraduates of the college, is very much of the nature of the "town and gown" feuds at Oxford and Cambridge. An amusing incident which occurred at one of the initiations is a proof of this assertion. A young man who had passed a year at another college, came to New Haven to enter Yale, and, as is the custom, pledged himself to join one of the freshmen societies, which he had passed his examination. The examination, however, was not passed, he was not even "conditioned." [A candidate for admission to a college who is "conditioned," is admitted, on the condition that he make up certain branches in which he is found deficient in the year 1865, when the societies began to initiate separately, in their respective halls, admitting no invited guests outside of their fraternities. The sophomores thought that Spooner was a New Haven boy, whose valor had got the better of his discretion. The cry of "Forward!" was raised, and he was immediately seized by his enraged hosts, and given a practical demonstration of the beauties of initiation. He was tossed in the blanket with angry vehemence. He was politely given a private box where he was treated to a choice specimen of stage "foreside." A free kick was given him, and he landed passenger in the wooden wheel, wherein, if think he could, he might think of "Fortune's furrows, fickle wheel," though not quite ready to say with King Lear, "Smile once more, turn thy wheel!"

He was guillotined in the highest style of the art. He was surrounded with "a din like a monster's roar," from tin horns, Chinese gongs, and other "cellululphian" instruments. In short, he was treated to all the vicissitudes of the feast prepared, together with additional delicacies contrived for his especial benefit, and was at last rescued, more dead than alive, by some good Samaritan, and taken to his room.

He was still in New Haven when initiation night came, and was very anxious to learn what mysterious ceremonies were used upon that momentous occasion. Though not naturally brave, Spooner (we must give him some name) walked up the stairs and into the hall where the initiation was in progress. His assurance enabled him to pass the guards, but while he was enjoying the serio-comic performance within, one of the sophomores noticed him, and upon inquiring he ascertained that the visitor was not a candidate for initiation. This occurred in the year 1865, when the societies began to initiate separately, in their respective halls, admitting no invited guests outside of their fraternities. The sophomores thought that Spooner was a New Haven boy, whose valor had got the better of his discretion. The cry of "Forward!" was raised, and he was immediately seized by his enraged hosts, and given a practical demonstration of the beauties of initiation. He was tossed in the blanket with angry vehemence. He was politely given a private box where he was treated to a choice specimen of stage "foreside." A free kick was given him, and he landed passenger in the wooden wheel, wherein, if think he could, he might think of "Fortune's furrows, fickle wheel," though not quite ready to say with King Lear, "Smile once more, turn thy wheel!"

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It is to shield the innocent, and save the guilty from more crime if possible, even if by so striving I forfeit in appearance my good name and the respect of friends."

"He looked at her in some surprise, and no little curiosity, her excited tone and manner being so different from her usual calm gentleness, but he only answered, and in a kindly tone—

"I do believe you, madam, and will add to the extent of my power."

Lord Nortonshall joined them at this moment, and laughingly insisted on knowing what conspiracy they were forming.

"We are simply going to invade the nearest room of your house," Lord Wedderburn answered, in the same strain.

"Madam, I admit your taste so much that she would like to see how it is carried out."

"Oh, certainly I shall only be too happy to have Lord Nortonshall's judgment. The only thing I fear is that some of the rooms may be too cold."

"Oh, we'll brave all that if you will only let us see them," said Claudia.

"I have wanted so much to see the rooms prepared for her ladyship, for I have been told—

"Told what?" Lord Nortonshall asked the fat lady, who at the same time drawing her arm through his with an assumption of proprietorship which was very disagreeable to her, and added in a low tone, intended for no other ears, "I am so delighted, *ma belle amie*, that you take an interest in my house. Some day, perhaps you will have a letter reason to think of and to love it."

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thing wrong if he found you in conference with his servant, so it wouldn't do to risk it in this house, but you might manage to see him at your own."

"How?"

"Ah! that's to be settled. Will you let me see you?"

"Certainly."

"I think I see a way. Does he never come to you with messages?"

"No, no."

"Well, if you'll trust it to me I'll get the messenger changed. Brown shall come for the future, and by that means you can see him without exciting any suspicion."

"Oh, thanks, thanks!" she exclaimed.

"But won't you give me a hint as to what you require?" asked his lordship.

"I am not curious, but I might be able to help you better if I knew what you are working for. At present I am entirely in the dark."

"No, no, I cannot tell you," Claudia said, hurriedly. "Do not ask me, my lord. Indeed, indeed I am very sorry to appear ungrateful, but I dare not take any one into my confidence as yet."

"Do just as you think best," he said, kindly. "I only hoped to be able to aid you more effectively; but I have no wish to pry into anything it is your desire to keep secret. Hush! here comes Nortonshall."

All the visitors had departed by this time, and Lord Nortonshall came to offer his escort to Claudia. She had no choice but to accept, and thanked him, at the same time casting an appealing glance at the other gentlemen, who answered it by saying—

"You may as well take me too. I am going in the same direction, and my cab is not here, so be charitable."

His lordship muttered an inward curse at being again balked of a *Utile* life with Claudia, but there was no help for it without betraying himself, and he muttered an ungracious assent to the proposition of his friend, who received it with an air of being totally unconscious that his company was not wanted.

The drive to Claudia Wynne's house was a silent one, the old adage of "Two are company, three none," being fully exemplified. Lord Nortonshall's inward curse grew louder, and the great relief of Claudia herself. After all she had already staked, she dreaded to risk the chance of a quarrel with her titled lover, but felt at the same time that she could not command herself so far as to listen to the language he would be sure to utter were they alone.

Dorothy was waiting up for her young mistress, and met her at the door with a very grave face. The good maid did not at all like her foster-child being mixed up with such a set, and though she knew Claudia too well to doubt the purity of her motives, and had a perfect faith in her, she did, it still grieved her faithful heart that her mistress should, even in a good cause, come into contact with others less pure in conduct than herself.

The two gentlemen bade adieu to Claudia, and went away, but without noticing Lord Dorothy's unpleasant expression of face, and commenting on it as they drove from the house.

"La Claudia is in for a lecture from that quarter," Lord Wedderburn remarked, with a smile. "The old lady looked very sour at our appearance with her young mistress."

"That's nothing fresh to me, at all events," replied the other. "She usually favors me with the very blackest looks whenever I present myself. I shall try and persuade Claudia to send her about her business."

"H'm! I think you are hardly likely to succeed in that. Have you heard her speak most affectionately of her dearest, and I'm sure she's very fond of the old woman. Claudia Wynne is not the sort of woman to part with an old friend unless she has good reason for it."

Lord Nortonshall growled an inaudible reply, and his friend having arrived near home, they parted.

Lord Wedderburn's estimate of Claudia was perfectly correct. She would not have parted with her faithful old friend on any provocation. Non-look and reproachful words passed by alike unnoticed. Dorothy might have crossed as she liked, her mistress knew her value and her faithful love too well not to bear it all for the sake of her many years' truth and devotion.

But Dorothy was not cross to-night—only sad. She sighed as she closed and barred the door after Claudia's entrance, and her face looked very downcast and troubled.

"Why, whatever is the matter, Dorothy?" asked her young mistress, trying to appear cheerful. "You are not angry with me for keeping you up so late, are you?"

"No, not angry—only grieved."

"Grieved? And for what?"

"Because I see you in company that is shame to an honest woman."

"Yes, shame. Ah, my darling, do you know what they are beginning to say of you?"

"They? Who?"

"Everybody."

"Everybody is a long word, Dorothy. I don't suppose there are many people in London who care to trouble their heads about my affairs, either one way or the other."

"Maybe, maybe. But, my dear, I thought my heart would break when I heard your name lightly spoken of no later than to-day."

Claudia grew very pale, then flushed again with indignation, but she drew her old servant closer to her side with a gesture of affection as she spoke.

"Do not you misjudge me, Dorothy," she said, in a low, broken voice. "For the last few weeks I have almost thought that my heart would break too. I know what is being spoken concerning me as well as you can tell me, but I have put my hand to the plough and cannot stop to know that the good name which my mother made me cherish as sacred above all earthly things is now at stake, and yet I cannot do other than risk it. I have a powerful motive which urges me on, but I cannot tell even you, my best and truest friend, of this world's end. It is only this much—I am striving to prevent a crime—a dreadful crime which circumstances might hereafter lay at my door. I have neither proof nor evidence to aid me, but must needs work alone. Heaven help me! at the cost, maybe, of good fame and reputation."

"You are speaking wildly, and in riddles, my dear child," said Dorothy, smoothing her soft hair with a caressing hand. "Perhaps you will think more calmly after a night's sleep, and you will think differently."

"That can never be until I have succeeded in my project, Dorothy. Listen to me. When you hear them speak of me as that man's—Ah, I cannot speak the word even to you; but when you are told that I submit to his carcases for the sake of his

gifts, and love him for his battery, remember what I tell you now—that it is a lie. I swear it to you by all I ever held most sacred in this world. I have him, dear old Dorothy—babe him as man never had by woman yet, and you shall see the day, if I do not die in the effort I am making now, when I will fling all his gifts in a heap at his feet and tell him how Claudia Wynne only courted his smiles that she might have the glory of unmaking his evil designs."

"You are exciting yourself too much. Will you not let me help you? I will be silent and faithful."

"Faithful unto death, and silent as the grave—I know that full well," said Claudia, warmly. "and when the time comes, I promise you shall help. I may need a friendly arm to lean on; but for the present I must work alone. You have not heard anything of my bottles?"

"Those lost from the cabinet?"

"Yes."

"Alas! nothing."

"Nor any of the others?"

"No, madam, none. I made every possible inquiry, but none of them had any purpose. Such a loss is very alarming."

"It is, indeed. Still more so, if, as I suspect, they have been taken by some one who understands their properties, and means to use them. I shall never know peace until I have them back in my keeping."

Dorothy said no more, but persuaded Claudia to go to bed and rest. She saw her cheeks were pale and her eyes glittering, and feared she might be ill.

Claudia was, indeed, far from well, though she made no complaint. She was terribly weary, but she knew that the powerful actress who had made so great an impression two short years before. Not that the public could see any alteration.

To the crowded audiences at the Elysium she was still the fascinating actress, whose every movement was grace, and whose slight change of expression was full of meaning. The excitement was telling upon her, and her private troubles added to the feeling of depression which was wearing her down, and Dorothy had hardly got to her bedroom before a mist rose to her eyes and she sank insensible upon the sofa.

It was on this same night that Austin Bertram was stricken down, and Frank Vavasour, who had been out, was met by his landlady with the intelligence, and a desire that he would go up to the sick man's room.

Frank was hardly surprised at the news, for from his intimate acquaintance with him, he had remarked the altered, haggard appearance of the gay man about town for some time past, and he took his place at the sick man's bedside till the doctor arrived, which event he awaited with no small alarm, as the delirium of the patient bore all signs of being a mortal one.

He was, however, not long in coming, and he had hardly got to the bedside when he was met by the doctor, who delivered his verdict with professional coolness.

"Brain fever," he said, after a cursory examination. "And likely to be a pretty severe attack. You must get a nurse for him."

"Can you help me to one?" asked Frank.

"Give me a pen and ink. I'll send for one at once. He must not be left for a moment to himself."

So in due course a note was sent off, and the nurse arrived and took up her post at Austin Bertram's bedside.

She arranged the sick chamber with a practiced hand, and then took her station to alleviate the suffering which she could not cure.

Frank retired when he had seen his friend was in good hands, but he passed the night in anxious thoughts, and he felt that Claudia Wynne, and the way in which her name was linked with that of the man he hated most on earth. He could never meet Lord Nortonshall again, and but for the love he still bore for Alma, and the regard which prompted him to stay and watch the comings and goings of the actress, he would have left England at once.

These thoughts kept him awake for nearly all the night, and when he went into Bertram's chamber the next morning, he was looking nearly as ill as the fever-stricken man who was tossing in the bed.

He looked at the sick man with a weary, and Frank remarked it.

"It will be different very soon, sir," she answered, with a smile. "I've been away from these sort of cases for a while, and had regular rest and all sort of thing, which makes one's work come hard at first."

"Have you had much trouble with your patient?"

"Not to say very much, sir, but it is very wearying to be constantly watching a person tossing and twisting, and having to listen to all sorts of stuff as no one can possibly understand."

"I should think so. Why, he's never stopped mutter, mutter, sometimes low, sometimes loud, and always about one thing."

"Indeed?"

"Perhaps I ought to say one person. It has been the same thing over and over again all through the livelong night. There he goes again."

The sick man had spoken, and Frank Vavasour turned round startled, for from his lips the words came clear and distinct.

"Jasper Glosson."

"That's a strange and unfamiliar name. It struck him strangely somehow, and he said, half aloud—

"What does he mean? Who can Jasper Glosson be?"

"I've been trying to make that out myself, the nurse said. He's talked about no one else, and from all he's said it's the name of a man who has been charged with murder, and revenge, and trying to kill a woman, and I don't know what else, but always with that name, and mixed up with a lot of foreign talk."

"All ravings, though, I suppose?"

"I don't know, sir. There's a many a truth told by a madman's tongue. I've heard men, and women, too, for that matter, rave on like him, and it's turned out to be true in the long run."

Frank was about to make some trivial reply, when again the name spoken by the sick man struck upon his ear, but this time he spoke it with more length.

"Jasper Glosson has sworn to do it, and he never breaks his oath!"

There was another pause, though the patient still kept muttering, but inaudibly, till another name escaped him.

"Maddalena, ha, ha, ha! Maddalena Wynne!"

Frank started.

"Great heavens!" he muttered, "Claudia's mother! What can this man have known of her?"

CHAPTER XXXV.
TAKING COUNSEL.

To take heed how you travel in this matter; Give to a rogue but ripe enough, he'll hang—No shall you see in this.

The words which he had heard fall from

Austin Bertram's lips kept ringing in the ears of Frank with a persistence for which he could in no way account. After all, the name might be nothing more than a coincidence, though it was very uncommon to hear the soft Italian wedding to the harsher gutturals of the English language.

"Jasper Glosson—Maddalena Wynne. Why should he harp upon those names?"

This was the question that kept forcing itself upon Frank Vavasour, who, as soon as he could get away in the morning, set out on his journey.

The first name he had never heard before to his knowledge, but the second had been very familiar to him by Claudia's frequent and loving references to her dead mother.

"Jasper Glosson."

He went on repeating the unfamiliar name to himself as he rolled rapidly along, but for some time with no further effect than to puzzle his brain in a vain attempt to recall it to his memory.

Suddenly he lay back in his seat with a strange tightening at his heart, which almost made him gasp for breath. He remembered the terrible thought which, like a lightning stroke, had flashed upon him.

"Jasper Glosson! the glove! 'J.G.'!" he gasped, rather than spoke to himself, as the recollection of the initials on the glove he had found and afterward lost in so mysterious a manner came into his mind.

Yes, they were surely identical, and it was a strange coincidence from Austin Bertram's lips. He must surely know the man, perhaps was implicated in his crimes. All was a confused whirl in the young man's mind. He could not fit the broken pieces together, but he resolved to tell all he remembered to Claudia, who he was able to throw some ray of light upon the matter; if not, he would hasten back to this man's bedside, hear all he could, and see if he could gather from his ravings any clue to the terrible secret which had been so long and so well concealed.

He was, however, not long in coming, and he had hardly got to the bedside when he was met by the doctor, who delivered his verdict with professional coolness.

It was on this same night that Austin Bertram was stricken down, and Frank Vavasour, who had been out, was met by his landlady with the intelligence, and a desire that he would go up to the sick man's room.

Frank was hardly surprised at the news, for from his intimate acquaintance with him, he had remarked the altered, haggard appearance of the gay man about town for some time past, and he took his place at the sick man's bedside till the doctor arrived, which event he awaited with no small alarm, as the delirium of the patient bore all signs of being a mortal one.

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